



## (U) Sitting in the SOO's Chair

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(S//SI) Where might the Director Central Intelligence, George Tenet, call to get the latest information on happenings in the world? NSOC, of course. Who answers the phone in NSOC? I do. I am a Senior Operations Officer or SOO. The SOO is the Director NSA's time-sensitive representative. Because the Director can't be on the ops floor, the SOO acts on his behalf determining the priority of actions and making critical time-sensitive decisions. As exciting and responsibility-laden as this position is, I can honestly say the best part of this job is the chance to know so much of what is going on at NSA and the extended enterprise - because being a SOO is not a SID job, it is an Agency job.

(U//FOUO) During the 10 months that I have served in this capacity, there have been several tense moments when the lives of American citizens as well as warfighters were in danger. Decisions made by the SOO impact the outcome of those situations. So, strong decision-making capabilities and the ability to communicate effectively are musts.

(S//SI) As routine as it is, "pass down", at the beginning of each shift, is critical to the continuity of operations. If one hasn't properly prepared one's "relief" there could be serious time lapses while the on-duty SOO figures out what is happening and why, impacting the timeliness of the decision making process. Other critical activities include:

- Each morning, collect information for the State of the Enterprise (i.e. anything affecting the use of resources, people, ongoing ops in any directorate), which is delivered to DIRNSA
- Write scripts for the SOO's portion of 15 Minutes
- Prepare notes for Dr. Cambone, USD (I)
- Fridays meet with A&P; to alert SOO's to situations that might flare up over the weekend.
- On any day be prepared for CRITICs, NOIWONs, or JCS exercises.\*\*
- Direct non-time sensitive actions to appropriate staff organizations.
- Wednesday listen in on the Campaign update
- Twice weekly standup with DIR, DDIR, SID and IAD Leadership and Associate Directorate Leadership, the chance to share with the entire Agency.
- Deal with zillions of phone calls ranging from crank to critical.
- "Entertain" visitors such as Fox News' Tony Snow.

(U//FOUO) There are many advantages to this position. The primary one is that when your 8-hour shift is up you can go home, comfortable and assured that someone else has taken the "con" and is doing the job as well or better than you. There is no need to hang around for an extra 2 or 3 hours to make sure something gets taken to closure. The second advantage that comes to mind is the camaraderie. A bond like no other develops between co-



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workers on shift work and besides, we have the best pig-ins! Also being exposed to NSA's successes every day inspires an even greater sense of pride and accomplishment. It is truly a unique and awe-inspiring circumstance.

(U//FOUO) Check out [the NSOC webpage](#) for further information.

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**\*\*CRITICs** are messages designed for the rapid dissemination of critical information.

- NOIWON=National Operations and Intelligence Watch Officers Network
- JCS=Joint Chiefs of Staff

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